

The Dream's Alive!

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Imagine walking into a carpeted showroom, and there under the lights, sit several brand new GMC motorhomes! They look absolutely factory fresh, but clearly more modern than the 70s version!

This is not a time warp from "Back to the Future", but rather a visit to Clasco Manufacturing Corporation, in Orlando, Florida.

To say that these coaches are new, is an understatement. They in fact look better than new. The deep luster of a base coat - clear coat paint jobs in soft light metallic grey or gold, and subtle exterior modifications, creates a two decade leap forward in appearance.

A close inspection shows that everything is new. The rubber on the windows, the main door latch,

window felts, side body moldings and newly chromed bumpers. Every small detail has a factory fresh look. Be still my heart, this is what my beloved GMC must have looked like almost two decades ago. I open the main door and see a soft light dove grey interior. Bright, fresh and sparkling. It is obvious that this is a different coach. Built in crystal displays, brushed aluminum reflective surfaces and soft, indirect lighting creates an elegant ambiance. From the automotive upholstered ceiling to the soft light colors of the cabinetry and the dashboard, the look and feel is that of a modern automobile on the showroom floor. It is impossible to believe that this vehicle is nearly twenty years old.

The Clasco facilities resemble a new car dealership. This is no simple repair shop to tune your engine or change your wheel bearings. Clasco is a complete restoration facility that can start at the roof rack, finish at the ground and renew everything from headliner to carpet, headlights to spare tire cover, radiator to tailpipe. The work is performed in a craftsmanlike fashion that once again, as it was when new,

makes a GMC the pride of the American highways.

For those who have seen them at the GMC international rallies in Missouri and Florida this past year, the Clasco Coaches displayed have been a source of admiration and wonder. A walk through a Clasco restoration is a "Gee, why didn't I think of that?" experience. China storage beneath the main table, television consoles which roll up between the driver and passenger seats, liquor locker storage in the floor and dozens of other improvements, both large and small, combine to create a much more practical, beautiful and liveable motorhome.

For a GMC owner, Clasco Manufacturing Corporation may be "GMC HEAVEN". This modern, brand new plant is totally dedicated to nothing but the maintenance and restoration of GMC motorhomes. This is not simply a garage. It is a complete facility, mechanical shop, cabinet shop, upholstery shop, paint shop, interior restoration shop, parts department and exterior restoration shop, solely devoted to GMC motorhomes and their owners. At Clasco anything from an oil change or engine overhaul, to a complete frame off restoration, can be accomplished by people who really understand GMC's.

Adjacent to the showroom for finished coaches, Clasco maintains a parts and accessories showroom which, for any owner, is like being a kid in a candy store. Here are many of the things you've always wanted,(or would have if you'd have thought of them), for your GMC. Remote transmission dip

"As an original owner in love with my GMC, I was increasingly saddened to watch her age like an elegant lady in declining years. Being able to completely renew the coach to a better than new standard has reestablished my love affair with my GMC."

Phil Sharrar

sticks, hidden wine lockers and the hard to find rubber parts and moldings. Hundreds of parts and accessories to maintain or renew your GMC.

Tony Bell, president of Clasco, like many of us who own GMC's, admired the coaches from the time they were new and always wanted to own one. In 1989 he was planning a one year trip to Eastern Europe and felt the GMC would be the perfect vehicle for travel, as tourist facilities are nearly non existent.

Tourist facilities are not available in Eastern Europe, and neither are service facilities for GMC motorhomes. It was absolutely essential that the coach be in a like new mechanical condition. Like all





GMC's, time had taken its toll on the 1975 Glenbrook Tony purchased and it was time to go bumper to bumper through the mechanical systems.

He wanted to redesign the entire interior and exterior to maximize comfort, storage and livability. The interior was removed, the body stripped and a meticulous reevaluation of every inch of space, very carefully planned and executed.

Tony had a major advantage. He had previously been the President and C.E.O. of Neonex of America, which owned among other things, seven RV factories. Neonex manufactured Dreamer, Security, Vanguard, Timberline, and Holidaire recreational vehicles, pick up campers, fifth wheels, travel trailers and motorhomes. At the Neonex headquarters in southern California, Tony personally supervised a thirty man design and prototype shop. During the 70's Neonex was responsible for the creation of some of the most innovative RV products ever sold in America. Tony was very aware of the needs of motorhome owners, and the creative use of space.

As the restoration of his coach progressed, many people exhibited an interest in having their coaches restored in a similar fashion. It was obvious that this could be the basis of a business which could provide a genuine service to a community of dedicated owners in a small niche market.

The idea of "restoration" varies dramatically from owner to owner. For some new carpet, upholstery and drapes, constitute a restored coach. For others, a new exterior paint job and aluminum wheels is a

"complete restoration".

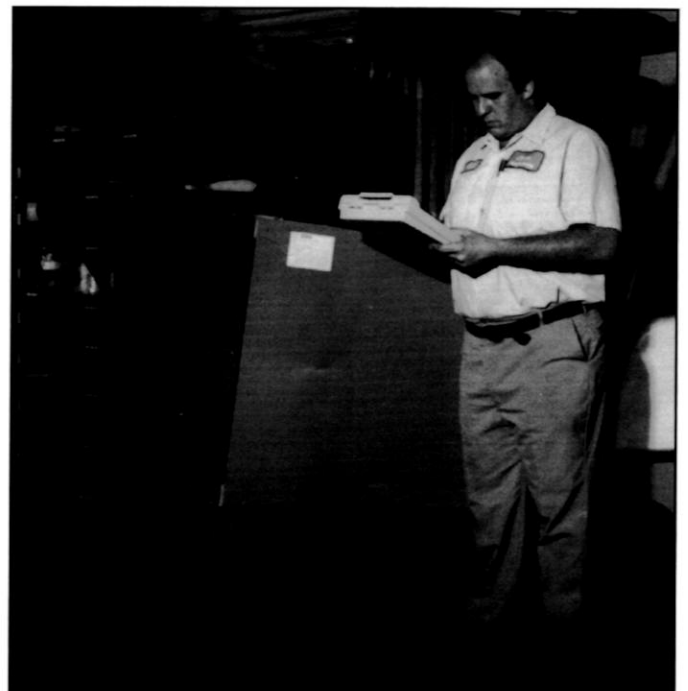
Ask three people to describe a boat. For one it is a fishing boat, for another a sail boat, and for yet another a cruise ship. The entire concept of restoration varies widely depending on your perspective.

Upon visiting the Clasco facility in Orlando, the common response of most customers who have spent years and thousands of dollars in restoration of their coach is "Oh my gosh, why didn't I know about you first!"

The GMC motorhome, like two seat Thunderbirds and early Corvettes, has become a classic. It has always been most peoples idea of what a motorhome should be. Were it manufactured today, it probably would be the most popular motorhome in America. While manufacturing the coaches is financially impractical, it is possible to create the equivalent of a new GMC motorhome.

The original GM marketing plan did not conceive the GMC as a pure motorhome. It was designed as a multipurpose vehicle for a young family. It was intended to sleep as many people as possible and provide seating for large groups. Yes, you could cook a meal and take a shower, but it was more of a large multi purpose van, than a motorhome designed for extended living.

Over fifty percent of all GMC motorhomes are still in the hands of the original owners. When new,



they were two to three times the price of an average class A motorhome. As a result, they were purchased by affluent young families and used for their intended purpose. Tailgate parties, taking the kids to the beach, and transporting large numbers of people. As more people now use these wonderful machines as a true motorhome, the requirements change. Owners want greater storage, comfort, and more practical use of space.

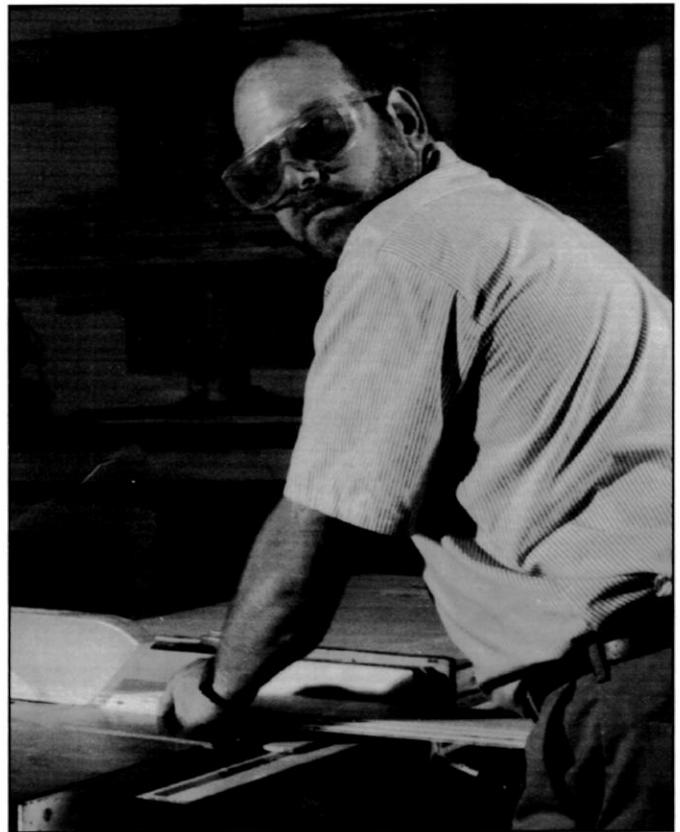
The objective of Tony's restoration was to create the most comfortable vehicle possible for two people, while providing accommodations for guests, on occasion.

This is no mural on the side, red plush velvet kind of restoration. It is a professional automotive approach to renewal.

For Clasco, the design philosophy is very simple. Create a coach which appears to have been manufactured by General Motors, but manufactured in the 90's rather than in the 70's. Nothing in the original engineering is altered. The design, shape, and form is timeless, but is now dated. On the exterior, cosmetic improvement, such as square halogen headlights, new logos, custom designed spare tire covers, bumper fills and the use of light modern colors update the original classic lines.

The green, gold, and orange color combinations, which were popular in the 70's, look old today. The use of dark woods and heavy colors on the interior made the coach appear small and confining. Clasco's use of soft light colors in cabinetry, upholstery, and interior fixtures, dramatically expand and brighten the interior. This is not a hang a microwave here and add a hook there approach to interior restoration, but rather an entire restyling of the interior, inch by inch, section by section, from headliner to carpet. The result is a motorhome that is not only beautiful and more useful, but, as the GMC was at the time of its original manufacture, a decade ahead of its time.

The cost of doing a proper restoration is not a great deal different than doing an amateur one. For most owners who wish to remodel and restore their GMC, finding craftsman to do the job can be a frustrating experience. Trying to find someone who really knows how to repaint and refinish the exterior is nearly impossible. Where do you find cabinet makers who understand the need for storage and convenience. Often even finding anyone knowledgeable willing to work on the coach is difficult. Where to



buy the parts for a GMC is a constant problem. As a result, most customer restored coaches lack refinement, elegance, and grace and yet the cost is the same as a professionally coordinated design.

Restoring a GMC is not dissimilar to restoring a classic car. If one family begins with a 1948 Ford four door sedan, and another with a 1948 Ford convertible, both spend precisely the same amount of money for mechanical, chrome, paint, upholstery and labor. When finished the 1948 Ford sedan is worth \$8,000.00 and the convertible is worth \$35,000.00. It is simply a question of doing it right the first time. It costs no more to do it correctly, but the result is an investment, rather than an expenditure which is not recapturable at the time of resale. In recent years, coaches restored by Clasco have resold in the \$50,000.00 to \$80,000.00 price range. Clasco restorations have created an entirely new bench mark of value for our GMC motorhomes.

Asking your mechanic to advise you on interior decor and design may result in new upholstery, but not in added value or lasting beauty.

For those who would love to be able to buy a new GMC were they still manufactured, Clasco has an attractive option. While manufacturing the

coaches is financially impractical, it is possible to create the equivalent of a new GMC motorhome.

Clasco is capable of a complete body off frame, ground up restoration, using all new or remanufactured parts. This is done in the same manner you would restore a fine classic car. The body is dismantled from the frame, all windows are removed and the interior is completely renewed. The frame is stripped completely to the rails, sand blasted and repainted. Every single nut, bolt and screw is removed and renewed. Everything about these coaches, from the tires to the roof air conditioners, is new. Clasco begins with a new radiator and moves right through engine, transmission, final drive, suspension system, fuel system and brake system using all new or remanufactured parts.

The body is sanded and refinished. All of the component parts are painted individually, then reattached with new unpainted fasteners. The coach receives a completely new interior. Every appliance, every pump, every hose is new.

The emphasis is on quality. No more chipboard and vinyl. All of the components manufactured by Clasco are clear plywood and formica, finished and lacquered. Quite frankly nicer than factory original.

The time required for a total restoration from paint to interior and mechanical varies between eight and twelve weeks, if it's scheduled in advance. A complete body off frame rebuild, including restoration, requires approximately four months. Clasco



"The dry bath conversion in my GMC overcame my wife's primary objection to our motorhome and saved us from having to buy a new one for one single feature."

Lee Moore

takes particular pride in delivering coaches to customers on time and on budget.

Tony, Jim, Mike, or Kelly are most happy to give you "the factory tour". Seeing coaches in all stages of destruction and reconstruction, you get a real view of how the process develops. A GMC with the interior completely empty, windows out of the body, and the body off the frame, is an amazing sight.

Clasco has done a substantial amount of original design work to overcome many of the primary objections in the original GMC design.

They do a new interior layout, which converts any 26ft. GMC to a complete walk between twin bed, with a totally separate stall shower. The original seating area remains intact. Storage is increased by almost 30%. For many owners, this is the layout GM should have built originally, but didn't.

For those who are satisfied with the original rear double bed arrangement, Clasco has a redesigned bath and refrigerator module system, which will convert any side bath 26ft. GMC to a much larger, brighter bath area, nearly double the original size, with a completely separate stall shower and a convenient dressing area. This is accomplished without any loss of seating or storage space. Sounds like magic? Believe me it is possible.

Clasco is very happy to do a complete restoration for you, from exterior paint to interior detail, or equally willing to provide you with dimensions, advice, color codes and parts so you can do it yourself.

When you visit Clasco you're most welcome to bring your camera and your measuring tape. They freely share and exchange ideas and are happy to



have you copy their designs, if you wish.

Many owners are very interested in restoring their GMC, but wish to do it in stages. Customers come to Clasco to have the exterior done one year, the interior the next or vice versa. With a long range plan from the beginning, items and accessories can be added as budgets can accommodate them. The result is your GMC can gradually equal the Clasco standard in easy, affordable stages.

Clasco's brochure headline is "The dream is alive". Seeing these magnificently restored machines proves that it truly is a possible dream.

As the decision was being made to create a facility dedicated exclusively to the maintenance and restoration of GMC motorhomes, most of the original tooling used by General Motors in the manufacturing of the coaches, became available. The injection molds used to make the body parts, the test fixtures, jigs, and many dies, were being resold after having been acquired by the Wheat Motor Corporation. Clasco was formed to purchase much of this equipment to remanufacture parts which had become obsolete. Many items which have for years been unavailable from General Motors, are again available from Clasco.

All of the curved, tempered and tinted side window glass, throttle and shift cables, exterior body trim rubber, main door gaskets and much, much more. Currently Clasco offers over 2,500 parts and accessories to bring the classic coach of the 70's into the 90's.

For example, windshields have been available at wildly fluctuating prices and quality from various sources. The problem was that all of these windshields were imported from overseas and did not really fit properly, had a bad distortion in the curve and were of generally poor quality. Clasco contracted with an American manufacturer for an exclusive agreement to recreate quality windshields for GMC motorhomes. They fit exactly and have no distortion. They are sold by Clasco for \$400.00.

In addition to providing original components, Clasco has also developed many new products exclusively for the GMC motorhome, to improve both its appearance and function.

A complete digital dash, which easily replaces the original analog instrumentation. The factory dash only told you that the temperature was between C and H, the oil pressure was between L & H. Clasco's new digital dash provides precise information on the engine's running temperature, oil pressure and voltage. It also has a resettable tripometer and tachometer.

More GMC motorhome engines and transmissions are lost from lack of good instrumentation than from failure of the components themselves. A blown radiator hose or oil cooler line, is generally discovered when the engine goes "rattle". By then it is too late. The new digital dash gives the driver current and complete information in an easily viewable black lucite panel. It is a practical and beautiful addition to any GMC.





The original 12 volt fuse panel and household style 110 box installed by General Motors in the lower wardrobe cabinet, can be replaced with a complete 110/12 volt circuit breaker panel. It can be mounted in the top cabinet of the wardrobe at eye level. It is no longer a hands and knees with a flashlight exercise, to figure out what is on, what fuse is blown or whether the power converter or hot water heater is plugged in.

A new sewer dump system allows you to lower the sewer pipe with a simple mechanism at the side of your coach. It contains the sewer hose permanently attached. This system eliminates the need for a separate sewer hose carrier. It makes connecting and disconnecting the sewer hose a sanitary, thirty second

"Finding a single source of friendly and knowledgeable people for my parts requirements has completely dispelled the fear I had about being able to maintain my GMC. The service at Clasco is wonderful."

Kevin Davis

operation.

A newly engineered monitor control panel allows you to get accurate information on holding and water tanks, battery and propane condition, in a LED display. This new panel uses a positive well nut sending unit, rather than the old obsolete, unreliable float style units originally provided by General Motors. Now your monitor control panel really tells the truth.

In many instances original tooling has been required to recreate the quality of the original product. In others remanufacturing commitments have been made for component parts no longer available. As the search for parts becomes increasingly difficult, it is great to find a company dedicated exclusively to solving the needs of GMC owners.

Clasco is willing to do custom work to fit almost any customer request. When asked for the most extreme example of a custom design, Tony replied that for a German customer, he once designed a full jacuzzi tub in the rear of a 26ft. GMC, complete with heaters and pumps, which was cleverly hidden beneath the rear bed. The owners wife agreed to their purchase of the motorhome, only when her husband promised her that she could have a jacuzzi. The design was successfully accomplished.

Clasco maintains a helpful staff of people available to any GMC owner on their toll free number. They love to talk about GMC maintenance and

restoration and will provide practical advice on how to, why to, and where to.

They are most happy to take your calls to discuss ideas. They know that ultimately the items that are unique to Clasco will be incorporated in any serious redesign.

All Clasco employees participate in the management of the company on a profit sharing basis. This partnership system generates a refreshing attitude of "How can I help?".

Clasco Manufacturing Corporation is located in southeast Orlando, about fifteen minutes from Orlando International Airport. Because so many airlines service Orlando and the Disney attractions, flights are very economical. Clasco will pick you up at the airport and spend the day with you, giving you a tour. This is a visit to "Sleeping Beauty's Castle" for adult GMC owners and a must for anyone considering a serious restoration.

At a time when we are finding it increasingly difficult to find service facilities willing to work on our motorhomes, let alone knowledgeable enough to do it, Clasco is an example of the kind of facility the GM community desperately needs. Companies dedicated to the preservation of "America's classic coach". The very name Clasco is derived from "classic coach".

Clasco welcomes factory tours Monday through Friday during normal working hours and are happy to

provide brochures and catalogs.

It is truly a joy to the heart of any GMC owner or potential owner to tour the Clasco facility.

Needless to say the trip to Europe never occurred. Tony's decision to create Clasco meant dedicating the past four years to making the dream a viable business. His coach sits in the Clasco showroom, ready sometime in the future for the "grand adventure" of a trip across Eastern Europe.

We sincerely hope that Clasco is a forerunner of facilities throughout the United States, which recognize the unique nature of the GMC motorhomes, and the needs of GMC owners. As owners we don't wish to be orphans in the world. We need companies like Clasco which can assist us today, tomorrow and in the future. Good luck Clasco and thanks for your faith and courage in the future of our coaches.

Editors Note:

Clasco Manufacturing Corporation is located at: 5603 Commerce Drive in Orlando, Florida, 32839, the toll free number is 1-800-ASK-4-GMC.

